

# MEMORADUM

**TO:** Highway Traffic Safety Partners

**FROM:** Susan Gorcowski, Associate Administrator for Communications & Consumer Information, NHTSA

**DATE:** January 23, 2012

**RE:** Updated Communication Information for 2012

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Last month, the Secretary of Transportation released the most recent highway fatality numbers. We have continued to have record success in reducing traffic crash-related fatalities. In 2010, 32,885 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States. This is a decline of 2.9% from 2009 and is also the lowest number of fatalities recorded since 1949!

As we collectively prepare for 2012, NHTSA will continue to build on the successful strategies that have brought us to this point. Great strides were made in saving lives through seat belt usage, appropriate use of child safety seats, and impaired driving. An addendum highlighting some key points is attached to this memo. For a more complete review of the 2010 data, check <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811552.pdf>.

Based on these successes, our 2012 initiatives will build from the 2011 plan. This memo will highlight our 2012 plans. As always, we suggest you check [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov) for all the latest communication materials.

## What's New in 2012?

### Impaired Driving

In August, NHTSA launched the new impaired driving campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* to support the ongoing high visibility enforcement efforts (HVE). While a number of states were able to use the new tag and materials we look forward to many more states embracing the new campaign and tagline in the coming year. This year we will launch a new Spanish language campaign - *Maneja Tomado Y Seras Arrestado*. The campaign includes new: 30 & :15 TV spots, as well as :30 radio spots. A new Spanish language microsite is being developed that will have the new TV spot, infographics, and impaired driving prevention tips. Please be sure to visit and use the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign's website for the latest updates, [www.nhtsa.gov/drivesober](http://www.nhtsa.gov/drivesober).

In partnership with the Ad Council, a two new public service advertising (PSA's) were launched at the end of December 2011 supporting *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving*. These new ads focus on the issue of consequences and are a great complement to our HVE campaign. These PSA's have caught the attention of PSA Directors and are enjoying great placement.

### Child Passenger Safety

Over the last year, we have developed new child passenger safety guidelines and a new child safety seat campaign, *Think Safe, Ride Safe, Be Safe* in partnership with *Chuggington*. *Chuggington* is an international computer-animated television series for children, ages 3-6, broadcast in 175 territories throughout the world and currently airs on the Disney Junior Channel in the U.S. In the first year we focused the campaign on car seat use. Materials included a PSA that gets extensive play on the Disney Channel, a website, activity book, a pledge and other materials. In 2012 we will include pedestrian and bicycle messages and materials. This promises

to be a very robust partnership and we are excited that the materials being developed in this relationship can be used by the states and our partners.

Working with the Ad Council, this spring we are launching a new English and Spanish CPS PSA campaign that will include television, radio, and outdoor, and internet. This will coincide with the launch of a new website that will provide more robust web content for parents and caregivers.

### **Seat Belts**

This year a new seat belt ad will be developed and made available to states. We will stick with the Click It or Ticket them and will focus on nighttime enforcement. As we decide on creative concepts we'll share with you in a timely manner. Other collateral will also be developed.

### **Distracted Driving**

As the Department of Transportation and NHTSA continue to focus on distracted driving and its deadly consequences, there are several new resources, including a redesigned [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov). A teen microsite has been developed. It can be found at <http://distraction.gov/teens/>. In addition, a new social norming component, *One Text or Call Could Wreck It All*, was launched in late 2011 with a television ad and other collateral.

In a complementary effort the State Attorneys General, NHTSA, and the Ad Council have launched the new *Stop the Texts. Stop the Wrecks.* public service advertising PSA campaign nationwide. All of the PSAs direct audiences to [StopTextsStopWrecks.org](http://StopTextsStopWrecks.org), a new campaign website where teens and young adults can find facts about the impact of texting while driving, and tips for how to curb the behavior. The website also has an area where individuals can post and share their solutions to stop texting and driving on Facebook. We are continuing to work with the Ad Council to expand this effort.

NHTSA will also be developing materials to support a hyperthermia campaign. The Administrator took his message to a number of states last year in an attempt to generate media on this horrific issue. This year we will be better organized with a campaign message and materials that we hope all communities will be able to rally behind.

### **Demonstration Projects**

NHTSA has concluded or launched several new state demonstration projects in 2011 based on the HVE model. The distracted driving HVE demonstration project in Hartford, CT and Syracuse, NY, successfully resulted in significant declines in both handheld cell phone use and texting (in Syracuse, both declined by one-third; in Hartford (where researchers initially identified drivers talking on their cell phones at twice the frequency - which left more room for improvement – there was a 57 percent drop in handheld use and texting behind the wheel dropped by nearly three quarters).

Building on the lessons learned from Hartford and Syracuse, we will be looking at implementing a statewide distracted driving demonstration in 2012.

There are also demonstration projects underway or soon to be underway on combined enforcement messaging for seat belts, impaired driving and other issues in Oklahoma and Tennessee; youth access to alcohol in Louisville, KY; Mason City, IA; Greenville, SC; and Ft. Kent, ME; and Impaired Motorcyclist Selective Traffic Enforcement. These demonstration projects provide valuable information on strategy and may factor into future highway safety activities and campaigns. In the meantime, you can go to [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov) to see the communication materials and strategy for these demonstration projects.

NHTSA has added more robust social media elements to all of the highway safety campaigns. From more posts and groups on Facebook; to tweets, retweets and Twitter parties; to other social marketing opportunities, NHTSA expects to be more aggressive in using these tools to engage audiences in conversations in all of our programs.

### **Calendar and TSM**

We encourage you to use the new 2012 National Communications Calendar that was sent via email last year and can also be accessed through [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov). This calendar is an important tool to help in your planning and where you'll find all the 2012 dates for mobilizations and crackdowns as well as those recognized awareness-building holidays that help bridge the gap between mobilizations and crackdowns.

Be sure to visit the newly-redesigned and improved [www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov](http://www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov) website regularly for the latest tools (including the National Communications Calendar), updates, and data. NHTSA will be phasing out all .com microsites or landing pages for our campaigns and materials over the next few months. The good news is that the [Traffic Safety Marketing](http://www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov) is your one-stop-shop for all items you used to access through multiple sites...now all-in-one. All new campaign and promotional material will be posted on this site as well to support the national activities and those conducted in each of your States. There will also be a section for sharing success stories with each other and to have a dialogue about issues you are dealing with in your states. Please use this section of TSM to talk to each other. There is no need to re-invent the wheel.

### **Moving in the Right Direction**

Our strategy is clearly working. Highly visible enforcement, with paid and earned media, clearly moves the numbers in the right direction. Collectively we need to continue to stay the course and remain disciplined in our approach.

Thanks again for all your hard work to make the highways safer. Also thanks for your feedback and questions on what we are doing in the communication office at NHTSA. Keep the cards and letter coming. It always helps us to hear from you.

Thanks again.

# **2012 FACT SHEET**

## **NEW STATS**

The 2010 stats have just recently been released from NCSA and while much work has been done, there is more to do. Here are the numbers you need to know.

### **Overall**

- In 2010, 32,885 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States—the lowest number of fatalities since 1949 (30,246 fatalities in 1949). This was a 2.9 percent decline in the number of people killed, from 33,883 in 2009, according to NHTSA's 2010 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).
- The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fell to a historic low of 1.10 in 2010. The overall injury rate remained the same from 2009 to 2010.

### **Seat Belts**

- Unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities decreased by 5 percent from 23,447 in 2009 to 22,187 in 2010.
- Fifty-one percent of passenger vehicle occupants killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes were unrestrained in 2010, based on known use.
- The percentage of passenger vehicle occupants killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes who were unrestrained proved to be one of the lowest percentages since FARS creation in 1975.
- The observed national seat belt usage rate decreased from 85 percent in 2010 to 84 percent in 2011.

### **Child Passenger Safety**

- Seventy percent (815) of children age 14 and younger killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes were occupants of passenger vehicles, in 2010.
- In 2010, 41 percent of children age 14 and younger killed in passenger vehicles were unrestrained, a 4 percentage point drop from 2009.

### **Distracted Driving**

In 2010, NHTSA created a new, more specific, measure of distraction in fatal crashes. This new measurement results in more specific fatal crash data by focusing on specific sources of distraction most likely to affect crashes.

- In 2010, nearly 3,100 (3,092) people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes involving distracted driving on U.S. roadways.
- We estimate a crash involving distracted driving occurred about every 30 seconds and that 419,000 people were **injured or killed** in a crash involving distracted driving in 2010-the equivalent of a distraction-related death or injury every minute.
- Distracted driving was estimated to be a factor in nearly one in five police reported crashes in 2010.

### Impaired Driving

- Alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities (fatalities in crashes involving a driver or motorcycle rider (operator) with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or greater) declined 4.9 percent from 10,759 in 2009 to 10,228 in 2010.
- In 2010, alcohol-impaired driving fatalities accounted for 31 percent of overall fatalities.

## UPDATED CAMPAIGN MANAGERS

Please do not hesitate to call or email any of our campaign managers whenever you have successful ideas you would like to share.

Elizabeth Graziosi  
[Elizabeth.Graziosi@dot.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Graziosi@dot.gov)  
 Child Passenger Safety  
 (202) 366-3587

Mike Joyce  
[Mike.Joyce@dot.gov](mailto:Mike.Joyce@dot.gov)  
 Seat Belts  
 (202) 366-5600

Kathryn Henry  
[Kathryn.Henry@dot.gov](mailto:Kathryn.Henry@dot.gov)  
 Youth Access to Alcohol  
 (202) 366-6918

Glacieria Mason  
[Glacieria.Mason@dot.gov](mailto:Glacieria.Mason@dot.gov)  
 Impaired Driving  
 (202) 366-5876

Kil-Jae Hong  
[Kil-Jae.Hong@dot.gov](mailto:Kil-Jae.Hong@dot.gov)  
 Buzzed Driving  
 (202) 493-0524

Lori Millen  
[Lori.Millen@dot.gov](mailto:Lori.Millen@dot.gov)  
 Distracted Driving  
 (202) 366-9742

We welcome this opportunity to work with you in 2012.